

REMARKS

This application has been carefully reviewed in light of the Office Action dated November 30, 2005. Claims 1 to 5 and 7 to 9 are pending in the application, of which Claims 1 and 7 to 9 are independent. Reconsideration and further examination are respectfully requested.

Claims 1 to 5 and 7 to 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, first paragraph, as allegedly failing to comply with the written description requirement. Claim 9 was rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 112, second paragraph, as allegedly being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention. Without conceding the correctness of these rejections, Applicant submits that the foregoing amendments have addressed these rejections. Accordingly, Applicants respectfully request reconsideration and withdrawal of these rejections.

Claims 1 to 5 and 7 to 9 were rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 103(a) over U.S. Patent No. 6,333,790 (Kageyama) and U.S. Patent No. 6,151,135 (Tanaka) in view of U.S. Patent No. 6,819,439 (Hayashi) and U.S. Patent No. 5,969,730 (Inose). Reconsideration and withdrawal of this rejection is respectfully requested.

The present invention concerns updating a calibration when a print head is exchanged in a print unit. In one aspect of the invention, new database and management files are created when using a first head and then a second head. Then, when the first head is used again, it is possible to avoid creating a new database file and a management file in regard to the first head.

Turning to specific claim language, amended independent Claim 1 is directed to an image processing method which includes a holding step for holding an original database in which a correction condition corresponding to a reproducing property of an output unit is stored;

a forming step for, as calibration processing, acquiring from the original database a gradation correction table, the gradation correction table corresponding to a recording medium to which image output is executed and head rank information of a head used in the output unit to create a new database, wherein the calibration processing not only creates the new database but also forms a management file indicating the new database has already been created; and a correction processing step for effecting correction processing regarding input data by using the created new database. When the image output is executed by the output unit, it is confirmed whether or not a new database file corresponding to the head used in the output unit has already been created. The creation of the new database file is executed if it is confirmed that the new database file is not created yet, and the creation of the new database file is not executed if it is confirmed that the new database file has already been created.

In contrast, Kageyama fails to disclose a management file as featured in Claim 1. Instead, and contrary to the assertions in the Office Action, Kageyama discloses using an individual printer information DB part 2121 in order to manage a printer. The individual printer information DB part 2121 stores information as an operating status of the printer engine 2200. (See Kageyama, column 5, lines 59 to 64). The printer information DB part 2121 stores register information, printer operation information, use information on each consumable article, operation information on each part, and other information in regard to the printer 200. However, Kageyama fails to disclose a management file indicating that a new database has already been created. As such, Inose cannot disclose using such a management file such that, when an image output is executed by the output unit, it is confirmed whether or not a new database file corresponding to the head used in the output unit has already been created, and wherein the creation of the new database file is executed if it is confirmed that the new database file is not yet

created, and the creation of the new database file is not executed if it is confirmed that the new database file has already been created

Furthermore, Inose discloses that a calibration process is executed by using the information stored in an EEPROM every time the head is newly exchanged, but does not disclose a management file indicating that a new database has already been created. As such, Inose, as with Kageyama, fails to disclose using a management file to confirm that a database file has already been created.

Finally, Applicant has carefully reviewed Tanaka and Hayashi and submits that they disclose nothing which can cure the deficiencies of Kageyama and Inose as noted above. Accordingly, Applicant submits that amended independent Claim 1 is now in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

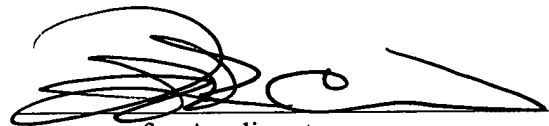
Claims 7, 8 and 9 are directed to an apparatus, a storage medium which stores therein a program for executing an image processing method, and a method, respectively, in accordance with the features of Claim 1. Applicant submits that the discussion from above in regard to Claim 1 applies as well to Claims 7, 8 and 9. Accordingly, Applicant submits that Claims 7, 8 and 9 are also in condition for allowance and respectfully requests same.

The other pending claims in this application are each dependent from the independent claims discussed above and are therefore believed allowable for at least the same reasons. Because each dependent claim is also deemed to define an additional aspect of the invention, however, individual consideration of each dependent claim on its own merits is respectfully requested.

In view of the foregoing amendments and remarks, the entire application is believed to be in condition for allowance, and such action is respectfully requested at the Examiner's earliest convenience.

Applicant's undersigned attorney may be reached in our Costa Mesa, CA office at (714) 540-8700. All correspondence should continue to be directed to our below-listed address.

Respectfully submitted,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Frank L. Cire', with a long horizontal flourish extending to the right.

Attorney for Applicant
Frank L. Cire
Registration No. 42,419

FITZPATRICK, CELLA, HARPER & SCINTO
30 Rockefeller Plaza
New York, New York 10112-2200
Facsimile: (212) 218-2200

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